

A

1790

CHOICE DROP OF HONEY

TO THE
FROM THE

ROCK CHRIST;

OR,

A SHORT WORD OF ADVICE

TO ALL

SAINTS AND SINNERS.

BY THOMAS WILCOCKS.

{1622}

{1632}

{1687}

{1699}

“He was wounded for our transgressions, He was
bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of
our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes
we are healed.” Isa. lii. 5.

“Who His own self bare our sins in His own body
on the tree, that we being dead unto sin, should
live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye were
healed.” 1 Peter ii. 24.

PRESTON:

Printed by E. SERGENT.

[Gwel y Cysfithiad Gymaeg
dan dder Cysfithiad]
“Dysgwyl i Fel”



TO THE

R E A D E R.

CH^RI^STIAN reader, I finding in this latter day the
the love of the Lord shining in some measure with its
pleasant beams in my heart, warming my affections, en-
flaming my soul, not only to give a spiritual echo in soul-
duty to so great a lover as my Saviour is, whose transcen-
dent love passeth knowledge; but also the loving and wish-
ing well to all Sion's heaven born children; for I find in
this day many poor souls tossed to and fro, ready to be car-
ried away with every wind of doctrine, by the flights of
men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to
deceive; and that there are so many foundations to build
upon that are false, upon which much labour is spent in
vain, that men are not speaking the truth in love; neither
are they growing up unto him in all things, which is the
head of Christ; There cannot be a growing in Christ
without an union to him: All that we do is cursed: Thou
wilt find therefore, gentle reader, in this ensuing little
treatise, if the Lord is pleased to bless the reading of it
unto thee as a still voice behind thee, saying, "This is
the way, walk in it, that thou turn not to the right hand,
nor to the left;" for the way into that pleasant path of
soul justification before God is in and through the righte-
ousness of Jesus Christ, for all our self righteousness is as
filthy rags; surely shall one say, "In the Lord shall all the
seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory." It is only the
dying of that Just One for us unjust ones, must bring us to
God: He that knew no sin, was made sin for us, that we
that were nothing but sin, might be made the righteousness
of God in him.

TO THE READER.

Christian reader, let all that is of old Adam in thee fall down at the foot of Christ: He only must have the pre-eminence: All the vessels of this new spiritual, new covenant temple, from the cups to the flaggons, must be all hung upon Christ; he is to bear the glory, for he is only worthy, for he is to build the temple of the Lord, and it is to bear the glory: He, by his Father's appointment, is the foundation-stone, corner-stone, and is the top-stone; he is the Father's fullness of grace and glory: Whatsoever thy wants be, thou mayest come to him, there's balm enough in him, fit for cure. *Reader, the good Lord help thee to experience this en-joining word of advice, that it may be made by God unto thee like honey, sweet to thy soul, and health to thy bones, and my soul shall rejoice with thee: Thy brother in the faith and fellowship of the gospel.*

T. WILCOCKS.



RECAPITULATION OF
A Choice Drop of Honey,
FROM THE
ROCK CHRIST.

A WORD of advice to my own heart and thine: Thou art a professor, and partakest of all ordinances, if thou dost well, they are glorious privileges; but if thou hast not the blood of Christ at the root of thy profession, it will wither, and prove but painted pageantry to go to hell in.

If thou retain guilt, self-righteousness under it, those vipers will eat out all the vitals of it at length. Try and examine with greatest strictness every day, what bottom thy profession and hope of glory is built upon, whether it was laid by the hand of Christ; if not, it will never be able to endure the storm that must come against it. Satan will throw it all down, and great will be the fall thereof, Matt. vii 27.

Glorious Professor, thou shalt be winnowed; every vein of thy profession will be tried to purpose: It is terrible to have it all come tumbling down, and to find nothing but it to bottom upon.

Soaring Professor, see to thy waxen wings betimes, which will melt with the heat of temptation. What a misery is it, to trade much, and brake at length, and have no stock, no foundation laid for eternity, in thy soul.

Gifted Professor, look there be not a worm at the
root

root that will spoil all thy fine gourd, and make it die about thee, in a day of searchings. Look over thy soul daily, and ask, Where is the blood of Christ to be seen upon my soul? What righteousness is it that I stand upon to be saved? Have I got off all my self-righteousness? Many eminent professors have come at length to cry out, in the sight of the ruin of all their duties, "Undone, undone to all eternity!"

Consider the greatest sins may be hid under the greatest duties, and the greatest terrors. See the wound that sin hath made in thy soul be perfectly cured by the blood of Christ; not skinned over with duties, humblings, enlargement, &c. Apply what thou wilt besides the blood of Christ, it will poison thee fore: Thou wilt find that sin was never mortified truly: Thou hast not seen Christ bleeding for thee upon the cross: Nothing can kill it, but beholding of Christ's righteousness.

Nature can afford no balsam fit for soul cure: Healing from duty, and not from Christ, is the most desperate disease: Poor ragged nature, with all its highest improvements, can never spin a garment fine enough (without spot) to cover the soul's nakedness: Nothing can fit the soul for that use but Christ's perfect righteousness.

Whosoever is of nature's spinning must be all unravelled before the righteousness of Christ, can be put on: Whosoever is of nature's putting on, Satan will come and plunder every rag away, and leave the soul naked and open to the wrath of God: All that nature can do, will never make up the least dram of grace that can mortify sin, or look Christ in the face one day.

thou

A DROP OF HONEY

Thou art a professor, goest on hearing, praying, and receiving, yet miserable mayest thou be. Look about thee; didst thou ever yet see Christ to this day, in distinction from all other excellencies and righteousness in the world, and all them falling before the majesty of his love and grace*.

If thou hast seen Christ truly, thou hast seen pure grace, pure righteousness in him every way infinite, far exceeding all sin and misery: If thou hast seen Christ, thou canst trample upon all the righteousness of men and angels, so as to bring thee into acceptance with God. If thou hast seen Christ, thou wouldst not do a duty without him for ten thousand worlds †. If ever thou sawest Christ, thou sawest him a rock, higher than self-righteousness, Satan and sin ‡; and this rock doth follow thee ¶; and there will be continual dropping of honey and grace out of the rock to satisfy thee §: Examine, if ever thou hast beheld Christ, as the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth †: Be sure thou art come to Christ, that thou standest upon the rock of ages, hast answered to his call to thy soul: hast closed with him for justification.

Men talk bravely of believing whilst whole and sound: few know it. Christ is the mystery of the scripture; grace the mystery of Christ: Believing is the most wonderful thing in the world. Put any thing of thine own to it, and thou spoilest it: Christ will not so much as look at it for believing. When thou believest and comest to Christ, thou must leave behind thee thine own righteousness, and bring nothing but thy sin (O that is hard), leave behind all thy holiness, sanctification, duties, humblings, &c. and

* Isa. i. 17. † 1 Cor. ii. 2. ‡ Psalm lxi. 2. ¶ 1 Cor. x.
§ Psalm lxxxi. 16. † 4 John i. 14, 16, 17.

and bring nothing but thy want and miseries, else Christ is not fit for thee, nor thou for Christ. Christ will be a pure redeemer and mediator, and thou must be an undone sinner, or Christ and thou will never agree: It is the hardest thing in the world to take Christ alone for righteousness; that is to acknowledge him Christ: Join any thing to him of thine own, and thou un-Christ's him.

Whatever comes in when thou goest to God for acceptation, besides Christ, call it antichrist; bid it be gone; make only Christ's righteousness triumphant. All besides that is Babylon, which must fall, if Christ stand, and thou shalt rejoice in the day of the fall thereof; Christ alone did tread the wine-press, and there was none with him*; If thou join any thing to Christ, Christ will trample upon it in fury and anger, and stain his raiment with the blood thereof. Thou thinkest it easy to believe; was ever thy faith tried with an hour of temptation, and a thorough sight of sin? was it ever put to grapple with satan, and the wrath of God lying upon the conscience, when thou wast in the mouth of hell and the grave? then did God shew thee Christ a ransom, a righteousness, &c. then couldest thou say, "Oh! I see grace enough in Christ." Thou mayest say that which is the greatest word in the world, "Thou believest." Untried faith is uncertain faith.

To believing, there must go a clear conviction of sin, and the merits of the blood of Christ, and of Christ's willingness to save upon this consideration, merely, That thou art a sinner; things all harder than to make a world. All the dower in nature cannot get up so high in a storm of sin and guilt, readily to believe there is any grace, any willingness in Christ to save.

When

When satan chargeth sin upon the conscience, then for the soul to charge it upon Christ, that is gospel-like: That is to make him Christ; he serves for that use. To accept Christ's righteousness alone, his blood alone for salvation, that is the sum of the gospel. When the soul in all duties and distresses can say, "Nothing but Christ, Christ alone," for righteousness, justification, sanctification, redemption*; not hamblings, not duties, not graces, &c. that soul hath got above the reach of the billows.

All temptations, satan's advantages, our complainings are laid in self-righteousness, and self-excellency: God pursueth these, by setting satan upon thee, as Laban did Jacob for his images; these must be torn from thee; be as unwilling as thou wilt: these hinder Christ from coming in, and till Christ come in, guilt will not out; and where guilt is, there is hardness of heart; and therefore much guilt argues little, if any thing of Christ.

When guilt is raised up, take heed of getting it allayed any way but by Christ's blood, that will tend to hardening; make Christ thy peace; not thy duties thy tears, &c. Christ thy righteousness, not thy graces, &c. Thou mayest destroy Christ by duties, as well as by sins. Look at Christ, and do as much as thou wilt: Stand with all thy weight upon Christ's righteousness; take heed of having one foot on thy own righteousness, another on Christ's. Till Christ come and sit on high upon a throne of grace in the conscience, there is nothing but guilt, terrors, secret, suspicions, the soul hanging between hope and fear, which is an un-gospel-like state.

He that fears to see sin's utmost vileness, the utmost hell

* 1 Cor. i. 30. † Eph. ii. 14.

FROM THE ROCK CHRIST.

hell of his own heart, he suspects the merits of Christ. Be thou never such a great sinner ¶. try Christ to make him thy advocate, and thou shalt find him Jesus Christ the righteous. In all doubtings, fears, storms of conscience, look at Christ continually: do not argue it with satan, he desires no better, bid him go to Christ, and he will answer him; it is his office to be our advocate§; his office to answer law as our surety†, his office to answer justice as our mediator, and he is sworn to that office: Put Christ upon it: If thou wilt do any thing thyself, as to satisfaction for sin, thou renouncest Christ the righteous, who was made sin for thee.

Satan may alledge and corrupt scripture, but he cannot answer scripture. It is Christ's word of mighty authority; Christ foiled satan with it. In all the scripture there is not an ill word against a poor sinner, stripped of self-righteousness: Nay, it plainly points out this man to be the subject of the grace of the gospel, and none else. "Believe but Christ's willingness, and that will make thee willing." If thou findest thou canst not believe, remember it is Christ's work to make thee believe, put him upon it, he works to will and to do of his good pleasure: Mourn for thy unbelief which is a setting-up of guilt in the conscience above Christ, and undervaluing the merits of Christ, accounting his blood an unholy, a common and unsatisfying thing.

Thou complaineest much of thyself: Doth thy sin make thee look more at Christ less at thyself. That is right, else complaining is but hypocrisy. To be looking at duties, graces, enlargements, when thou shouldest be looking at Christ, that is pitiful: Looking at them will make thee proud; looking at Christ's grace

¶ 1 John ii. 1. § 1 John ii. 1. † Heb. vii. 22.

grace will but make thee humble: By grace you are saved. In all thy temptations be not discouraged: Those surges may be (not to break thee, but) to have thee off thyself on the rock Christ.

Thou mayest be brought low, even to the brink of hell, ready to tumble in; thou canst not be brought lower than the belly of hell: Many saints have been there even dowed in hell, yet there thou mayest cry; there thou mayest look toward the holy temple; Into that temple none might enter but purified ones, and with an offering too: But now Christ is our temple, sacrifice, altar, high-priest, to whom none must come but sinners, and that without any offering, but his own blood once offered.

Remember all the patterns of grace that are in heaven. Thou thinkest, O what a monument of grace wouldest thou be! There are many thousands as rich monuments as thou canst be. The greatest sinner did never pass the grace of Christ. Do not despair: Hope still when the clouds are blackest, even then look towards Christ, the standing pillar of the Father's love and grace, set up in heaven for all sinners to gaze upon continually. Whatsoever satan or conscience say, do not conclude against thyself, Christ shall have the last word; he is judge of quick and dead, and must pronounce the final sentence: His blood speaks reconciliation, cleansing, purchase, redemption, purging, remission, liberty, justification, righteousness to God. Not a drop of this blood shall be lost. Stand and hearken what God will say, for he will speak peace to his people, that they return no more to folly. He speaks grace, mercy, and peace: That is the language of the Father and of Christ. Wait for Christ's appearing as the morning-star. He shall come as certainly as the morning, as refreshing as the rain. The

FROM THE ROCK CHRIST

11

The sun may as well be hindered from rising as Christ the sun of righteousness: Look not a moment off Christ. Look not upon sin, but look upon Christ first: When thou mournest for sin, if thou doest not see Christ then, away with it. In every duty look at Christ before duty, to pardon; in duty, to assist; after duty, to accept: Without this it is but carnal careless duty. Do not legalize the gospel, as if part did remain for thee to do and suffer, and Christ were but an half mediator; and thou must bear part of thy own sin, make part satisfaction. Let sin break thy heart, but not thy hope in the gospel.

Look more at justification than at sanctification, and that in order to sanctification: for true faith in Christ's death and sufferings doth itself sanctify, in whatever heart it takes place.

In the highest commands consider Christ, not as an exactor to require; but a debtor, an undertaker, to work. If thou hast looked at workings, duties, qualification, &c. more than at the merits of Christ, it will cost thee dear: No wonder thou goest complaining, graces may be evidences, the merits of Christ alone (without them) must be the foundation of thy hope to bottom on: Christ only can be the hope of glory.

When we come to God, we must bring nothing but Christ with us. Any ingredients or any previous qualifications of our own will poison and corrupt faith. He that builds upon duties, graces, &c. knows not the merits of Christ. This makes believing so hard, so far above nature; if thou believest, thou must every day renounce, as dung and dross, thy privileges, thy obedience, thy baptism, thy sanctification, thy duties, thy graces, thy tears, thy meltings, thy hum-
blings

blings, and nothing but Christ must be held up: Every day thy workings thy self-sufficiency must be destroyed; Thou must take all out of God's hand. Christ is the gift of God, faith is the gift of God, pardon a free gift. Ah, how nature storms, frets, rageth at this, that all is of gift, and it can purchase nothing with its actings, and tears, and duties, that all workings are excluded, and of no value in heaven.

If nature had been to contrive the way of salvation, it would rather have put it into the hands of saints or angels, to sell it, than of Christ who gives freely, whom therefore it suspects; it would have set up a way to purchase by doing; therefore it abominates the merits of Christ, as the most destructive things to it. Nature would do any thing to be saved rather than go to Christ, or close with Christ: Christ will have nothing: the soul will force somewhat of its own upon Christ. Herein is that great controversy. Consider didst thou ever yet see the merits of Christ and the infinite satisfaction made by his death? didst thou see this when the burthen of sin and the wrath of God lay heavy on thy conscience? that is grace. The greatness of Christ's merit is not known but to a poor soul at the greatest loss. Slight convictions will not have slight, low prizings of Christ's blood and merits.

Despairing Sinner! thou lookest on thy right hand and thy left, saying, "Who will shew us any good?" thou art tumbling over all thy duties and professions to patch up a righteousness to save thee: Look at Christ now, look to him and be saved, all the ends of the earth: there is none else: He is a Saviour, and there is none besides him: Look any where else, and thou art undone. God will look at nothing but Christ, and thou must look at nothing else. Christ is lifted up on high, as the brazen serpent in the wilderness, that

that sinners at the ends of the earth, the greatest distance, may see him, and look towards him: The least sight of him, will be saving, the least touch healing to thee; and God intends thou shouldst look on him for he hath set him upon a high throne of glory, in the open view of all poor sinners. Thou hast infinite reason to look on him, no reason at all to look off him; for he is meek and lowly of heart. He will do that himself which he requires of his creature. viz. bear with infirmities, not pleasing himself, not standing upon points of law: He will restore with the spirit of meekness, and bear thy burthen: He will forgive, not only till seven times, but till seventy times seven: It put the faith of the apostle to it to believe this; because we are hard to forgive, we think Christ is hard.

We see sin great, we think Christ doth so, and measure infinite love with our line, infinite merits with our sins, which is the greatest pride and blasphemy: Hear what he saith, "I have found a ransom:" "In him I am well pleased:" God will have nothing else; nothing else will do thee good, or satisfy conscience, but Christ, who satisfied the Father. God doth all upon the account of Christ: Thy deserts are hell, wrath, rejection; Christ's deserts are life, pardon, and acceptance: He will not only shew thee the one, but he will give thee the other. It is Christ's own glory and happiness to pardon, Consider, whilst Christ was upon the earth, he was more among publicans and sinners than among scribes and pharisees, his professed adversaries; for they were righteous ones. It is not as thou imaginest, that this state in glory makes him neglectful, scornful to poor sinners; no, he hath the same heart now in heaven; he is God, and changeth not; "he is the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world." He went through all the temptations, dejections, sorrows, desertions, rejections
and

and hath drunk the bitterest of the cup, and left the sweet; the condemnation is out: Christ drunk up all the Father's wrath at one draught; and nothing but salvation is left for thee, Thou sayest thou canst not believe, thou canst not repent: Fitter for Christ if thou hast nothing but sin and misery: Go to Christ with all thy impenitency and unbelief, to get faith and repentance from him, that is glorious. Tell Christ, "Lord, I have brought no righteousness, no grace to be accepted in or justified by: I am come for thine, and must have it." We would be bringing to Christ, and that must not be. Not a penny of nature's highest improvements will pass in heaven. Grace will not stand with works: That is a terrible point to nature, which cannot think of being stript of all, not having a rag of duty or righteousness left to look at: self-righteousness, self-sufficiency, are the darlings of nature, which she preserves as her life, that makes Christ seem ugly to nature. Nature cannot desire him; he is just directly opposite to all nature's glorious interests. Let nature but make a gospel, and it would make it quite contrary to Christ: it would be to the just, the innocent, the holy, &c. Christ made the gospel for thee, that is, for needy sinners; the ungodly, the unrighteous, the accursed, Nature cannot endure to think the gospel is only for sinners; it will rather chuse to despair than go to Christ upon any such terrible terms: When nature is but put to it by guilt or wrath, it will go to its old haunts of self-righteousness, self-goodness, &c. An infinite power must cast down those strong holds. None but the self-justiciary stand excluded out of the gospel: Christ will look at the most abominable sinner before him, because to such an one Christ cannot be made justification; he is no sinner. To say in compliment, "I am a sinner," is easy; but to pray with the publican indeed, "Lord be merciful to me a sinner," is the hardest prayer in the world.

world. It is easy to say, "I believe in Christ; but to see Christ full of grace and truth, of whose fullness thou mayest receive grace for grace; that is saying. It is easy to profess Christ with the mouth; but to confess him with the heart, as Peter, "to be the Christ the Son of the living God, the alone Mediator," that is above flesh and blood. Many call Christ Saviour; few know him so. To see grace, salvation in Christ, is the greatest sight in the world; none can do that, but at the same time they shall see that glory and salvation to be theirs. Sights will cause applications. I may be ashamed to think in the midst of so much profession, that I have known little of the blood of Christ, which is the main thing of the gospel. A Christless, formal profession, will be the blackest sight, next to hell, that can be. Thou mayest have many good things, and yet one thing may be wanting, that may make thee go away sorrowful from Christ. Thou hast never sold all; thou hast never parted with all thine own righteousness, &c. Thou mayest be high in duty and yet a perfect enemy to and adversary to Christ, in every prayer, in every ordinance. Labour after sanctification to thy utmost; but make not a Christ of it to save thee; if so, it must come down one way or other, Christ's infinite satisfaction, not thy satisfaction, must be thy justification before God. When the Lord shall appear terrible out of his holy place, fire shall consume that as hay and stubble. This will be sound religion, only to bottom all upon the everlasting mountains of God's love and grace in Christ, to live continually in the sight of Christ's infinite righteousness and merits, that are sanctifying, without them the heart is carnal, and in those sights to 'see the full vileness, yet littleness of sin,' and to see all pardoned; in those sights to pray hear, &c. seeing thy polluted self and all thy weak performances accepted continually; in those sights to trample upon all thy self-glories, righteousness, privileges,

leges, as abominable, and be found continually in the righteousness of Christ only, rejoicing in the ruins of thy own righteousness, the spoiling of all thine own excellencies, that Christ alone, as mediator, may be exalted in his throne, mourning over all thy duties, how glorious soever, that thou hast not performed in the sight and sense of Christ's love: Without the blood of Christ on the conscience, all is dead service. Heb. ix. 14.

* That opinion of free-will, so cried up, will be easily confuted as it is by scripture, in the heart which hath had any spiritual dealing with Jesus Christ, as to the application of his merits, and subjection to his righteousness. Christ is every way so magnificent a person for poor nature to close withal, or to apprehend. Christ is so infinitely holy, nature durst never look at him; so infinitely good, nature can never believe him to be such, when it lies under full sight of sin, Christ is too high and glorious for nature so much as to touch. There must be a divine nature first put into the soul, to make it lay hold on him, he lies so infinitely beyond the sight or reach of nature.

That Christ which natural free-will can apprehend, is but a natural Christ of a man's own making, not the Father's Christ, not Jesus the Son of the living God, to whom none can come without the Father's drawing. Finally, search the scriptures daily, as mines of gold, wherein the heart of Christ is laid. Watch against constitution-sins, see them in their vileness, and they shall never break out into act. Keep always an humble, empty, broken frame of heart, sensible of any spiritual miscarriages, ab servant of all inward workings, fit for the highest communications. Keep not guilt in the conscience, but apply the blood of Christ immediately. God chargeth sin and guilt upon

upon thee to make thee look to Christ the brazen serpent.

Judge not Christ's love by providences, but by promises. Bless God for shaking off false foundations, for any way whereby he keeps the soul awakened and looking after Christ; better sicknesses, temptations, than security slightness.

A flighty spirit will turn a profane spirit, and will sin and pray too. Slightness is the bane of profession, if it be not rooted out of the heart, by constant and serious dealings with, and beholdings of Christ in duties: It will grow more strong and more deadly, by being under church-ordinances. Measure not thy graces, by others attainments, but by scripture-trials. Be serious, exact in duty, having the weight of it upon the heart; but be as much afraid of taking comfort from duties as from sins. Comfort from any hand but Christ is deadly. Be much in prayer, or you will never keep up much communion with God. As you are in closet-prayer, so you will be in all other ordinances.

Reckon not duties by high expressions, but by low frames; and the beholdings of Christ. Tremble at duties and gifts. It was the saying of a great saint, "he was more afraid of his duties than his sins;" the one often made him proud, the other always made him humble. Treasure up manifestations of Christ's love; they make the heart low for Christ, too high for sin. Slight not the lowest, meanest evidence of grace; God may put thee to make use of the lowest as thou thinks; even that (John iiii. 14) may be worth a thousand worlds to thee.

Be true to truth, but not turbulent and scornful;
revere

restore such as are fallen; help them up again with all the bowels of Christ. Set the broken disjointed bones with the grace of the gospel: HIGH PROFESSOR! despise not weak saints; thou mayest come to wish to be in the condition of the meanest of them. Be faithful to others infirmities, but sensible of thy own. Visit sick beds and deserted souls much; they are excellent scholars in experience.

A bids in your calling. Be dutiful to all relations as to the Lord. Be content with little of the world; little will serve. Think very little of the earth much because unworthy the least: Think much of heaven; not too little, because Christ is so rich and free.

Think every one better than thyself, and ever carry self cloathing about thee, as one fit to be trampled upon by all saints. See the vanity of the world, and the consumption that is upon all things, and love nothing but Christ. Mourn to see so little of Christ in the world; so few need him: Trifles please them better. To a secure soul Christ is but a fable, the scriptures but a story. Mourn to think how many under baptism church-order that are not under grace, looking much after duty, obedience, little after Christ, little versed in grace. Prepare for the cross, welcome it, bear it triumphantly like Christ's cross, whether scoffs, mockings jeers, contemps, imprisonment, &c. but see it be Christ's cross, not thine own.

Sin hindering from glories in the cross of Christ, omitting little truths against light may breed hell in the conscience, as well as committing the greatest sins against light. If thou hast been taken out of the belly of hell into Christ's bosom, and made to sit among princes in the household of God, oh, how shouldest thou live as a pattern of mercy. Redeemed restored soul!

soul! what infinite sums dost thou owe Christ! with what singular frames must thou walk, and do every duty! on sabbaths, what praising-days, singing of hallelujahs, should they be to thee! Church-fellowship, what a heaven, a being with Christ, and angels and saints communion; what a drowning the soul eternal love as a burial with Christ, dying to all things besides him! Every time thou thinkest of Christ, be astonished, and wonder; and when thou seest sin look at Christ's grace that did pardon it; and when thou art proud, look at Christ's grace, that shall humble and strike thee down in the dust.

Remember Christ's time of love when thou wast naked †, and then he chose thee: Canst thou ever have a proud thought? Remember whose arms supported thee from sinking, and delivered thee from the lowest hell ‡, and shout in thee ears of angels and men*, and for ever sing praise, praise; grace, grace. Daily repent and pray, and walk in the light of grace, as one that hath the anointings of grace upon thee. Remember thy sins, Christ's pardonings; thy deserts, Christ's merit; thy weakness, Christ's strength: thy pride, Christ's humility; thy many infirmities, Christ's restorings; thy guilts, Christ's new applications of his blood; thy failings, Christ's raisings-up; thy wants, Christ's fulness; thy temptations, Christ's tenderness; thy vileness, Christ's righteousness.

Blessed soul! whom Christ shall find not having on his own righteousness ¶, but having his robes washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb §. Woful miserable professor! that hate not the gospel within, rest not in church trials; thou mayest pass that, and be cast away in Christ's day of trial; thou mayest
come

† Ezek. xvi. 8. 9.

‡ Psalm lxxxvii. 13.

* Psalm cxlviii.

¶ Phil. iii. 9.

§ Rev. vii. 14

come to baptism and never come to Jesus, and the blood of sprinkling*. Whatever workings or attainments of Christ's blood, merits, righteousness, the main object of the gospel, falls short of the gospel, and leaves the soul in a condition of doubtings, and questionings: And doubtings, if not looked unto betimes will turn to a slowness of the spirit, one of most dangerous frames. Trifle not with ordinance. Be much in meditation and prayer. Wait diligently upon all hearing-opportunities: We had need of doctrine, reproof, exhortation, consolation, as the tender herbs and the grass hath of the rain, the dew; the small rain and the showers. Do all thou doest as soul work as unto Christ†, as immediately dealing with Christ Jesus, as if he were looking on thee, and thou on him, and fetch all thy strength from him.

Observe what holy motions you find in your souls to duties; prize the least good thought thou hast of Christ, the real good word thou speakest of him sincerely from the heart, rich mercy: O bless God for it! observe it every day you have the day-spring from on high, with his morning-dews of mourning for sin, constantly visiting thee: Have you the bright morning star, with fresh influences of grace and peace, constantly arising, and Christ sweetly greeting the soul in all duties? What duty makes not more spiritual, will make more carnal; what doth not quicken and humble will deaden and harden.

Judas may have the sop, the outward privilege and perform all duties. Nothing but lying in that bosom will dissolve hardness of heart, and make thee to mourn kindly for sin, and cure slowness and ordinariness of spirit, that gangrene in profession: That will humble indeed, and make the soul cordial to Christ, and sin vile

* Heb. xii, 24. † Zach. vii, 5, 6.

vile to the soul, yea transform the ugliest piece of hell into the glory of Christ. Never think thou art right as thou shouldst be a christian of any attainment, until thou come to this, always to see and feel thyself dying in the bosom of Christ, who is in the bosom of his Father †, come and move the Father for fights of Christ and you shall be sure to speed; you can come with no request that pleaseth him better; he gave him out of his own bosom for that very end, to be held up before the eyes of all sinners, as the everlasting monument of his Father's love.

Looking at the natural sun weakeneth the eye: The more you look at Christ, the sun of righteousness, the stronger and clearer will the eye of faith be: Look but at Christ, you will love him, and live on him: Think on him continually: keep the eye constantly upon Christ's blood, or every blast of temptation will shake you. If you will see sin's sinfulness, to loath it and mourn, do not stand looking upon sin, but look upon Christ first, as suffering and satisfying. If you would see your graces, your sanctification, do not stand gazing upon them, but look at Christ's righteousness in the first place; see the Son; and you see all; look at your graces in the second place;

When you act faith, what you first look at, that you expect settlement from, and make it the bottom of your hope. Go to Christ in sight of your sin and misery, not of thy grace and holiness: Have nothing to do with thy grace and sanctification of baptism, supper, church-fellowship, &c. but John leaned on Christ's bosom, that is the gospel-ordinance posture, in which we should pray, and hear, they will but veil Christ, till thou hast seen Christ first. He that looks upon Christ through his graces, is like one that sees the sun
in

† John i. 18.

in water, which wavereth, and move as the water doth: Look upon Christ only as shining in the firmament of the Father's love and grace; you will not see him but in his own glory, which is unspeakable. Pride and unbelief will put you upon seeing somewhat in yourself first; but faith will have to do with none but Christ, who is inexpressibly glorious, and must swallow up my sanctification as well as thy sin; for God made him both for us, and we must make him both: He that sets up his sanctification to look at to comfort him, he sets up the greatest idol, which will strengthen his doubts and fears. Do but look off Christ, and presently, like Peter, you sink in doubts.

A Christian never wants comfort, but by breaking the order and method of the gospel, looking on his own, and looking off Christ's perfect righteousness, which is to cause rather to live by candle-light than by the light of the sun. The honey that you suck from your own righteousness will turn into perfect gall, and the light that you take from that to walk in, will turn into black night upon the soul. Satan is tempting thee, by putting thee to plod about thy own grace, to get comfort from that; then the Father comes and points thee to Christ's grace as rich and glorious, infinitely pleasing him, and biddeth thee study Christ's righteousness; and his buildings are enablings; that is a blessed motion, a sweet whispering, checking thy unbelief; follow the least hint close with much prayer; prize it as an invaluable jewel, it is an earnest of more to come.

Again: If you would pray, and cannot, and so are discouraged, see Christ praying for you, using his interest with the Father for you. What can you want? If you be troubled, see Christ your peace, leaving you

you peace when he went up to heaven, again and again charging you not to be troubled, no not in the least sinfully troubled, so as to obstruct thy comfort or thy believings. He is now upon the throne, having spoiled upon his cross in the lowest state of his humiliation, all whatsoever can hurt or annoy thee; he hath borne all thy sins, sorrows, trouble, temptations, &c. and is gone to prepare mansions for thee.

Thou who hast seen Christ all, and thyself absolutely nothing, who makest Christ all thy life, and art dead to all righteousness besides; thou art the christian, one highly beloved, and who hath found favour with God, a favourite of heaven. Do Christ this one favour for all his love to thee, love all his poor saints and churches the meanest, and weakest, notwithstanding any difference in judgment, they are engraven on his heart as the names of the children of Israel on Aaron's breast plate†, let them be so on thine. Pray for the peace of Jerusalem; they shall prosper that love thee*.

¶ John xiv. i. 27. † Exod. xxviii. 21. * Psalm cxii. 6.

PRECIOUS FAITH: 2 Peter i. 1.

WHIL'ST we by faith, in Jesu's blood,
Preserve unshaken peace,
We then delight in all that's Good;
From every evil cease,

II.
But if to unbelieving fears,
We in the least give way,

The carnal mind again appears,
Again asserts its sway.

III.
The secret of true holiness,
And conquest over sin.

Is faith in Jesu's Righteousness,
That lives unmov'd therein

VI.
This faith it purifies the heart,
And calms the troubled breast;
It heals the soul, cures all its smart,
And gives imperfect rest.

V.
This faith, eternal life receives,
And conquers every ill;
This faith, in God, each moment breathes,
And centers in his will.

VI.
This faith it Abba Father cries,
With joy beholds his face;
Its all, on Jesus Christ relies.
And glories in his grace.

VII.
This precious faith gives birth to love;
From love, all blessings flow,
Still more, may we its sweetness prove,
Still more, its virtues know.

FEB. 6, 1796.



COR. CAYLEY.

